A

WORD

TO A

PROTESTANT.

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A

WORD *to a* PROTESTANT.

DON'T *you* call yourſelf a *Proteſtant?* Why ſo? Do you know what the Word means? What is a *Proteſtant?* I ſuppoſe you mean one that is not a *Papiſt?* But what is a *Papiſt?* If you don't know, ſay ſo. Acknowledge you cannot tell. Is not this the Caſe? You call yourſelf a *Proteſtant:* But you know not what a *Proteſtant* is. You talk againſt *Papiſts:* And yet neither do you know what a *Papiſt* is. Why do you *pretend* then to the Knowledge which you have not? Why do you uſe Words which you don't underſtand?

2. Are you deſirous to know what theſe Words, *Papiſt* and *Proteſtant*, mean? A *Papiſt* is one who holds the Pope, or Biſhop of *Rome*, (the Name *Papa*, that is, *Father*, was formerly given to all Biſhops) to be Head of the whole Chriſtian Church: And the Church of *Rome*, or that which owns the Pope as their Head, to be the only Chriſtian Church.

3. In a Courſe of Years, many Errors crept into this Church, of which good Men complained from Time to Time. At laſt, about two hundred Years ago, the Pope appointed many Biſhops, and others, to meet at a Town in *Germany*, called *Trent*. But theſe, inſtead of amending thoſe Errors, eſtabliſhed them all by a Law; and ſo delivered them down, to all ſucceeding Generations.

4. Among theſe Errors may be numbered, their Doctrine of Seven Sacraments; of Tranſubſtantiation; of Communion in one Kind only; of Purgatory, and praying for the Dead therein; of Veneration of Relicks, and of Indulgences, or Pardons granted by the Pope, and to be bought for Money.

It is thought by ſome, that theſe Errors, great as they are, do only defile the Purity of Chriſtianity: But it is ſure, the following ſtrike at its very Root, and tend to baniſh true Religion out of the World.

5. Firſt, the Doctrine of *Merit*. The very Foundation of Chriſtianity is, that a Man can *merit* Nothing of GOD: That we are freely juſtified by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in JESUS CHRIST: Not for any of our Works, or of our Deſervings; but by Faith in the Blood of the Covenant.

But the Papiſts hold, That a Man may by his Works *merit* or deſerve eternal Life; and that we are juſtified, not by Faith in CHRIST alone, but by Faith and Works together. !

This Doctrine ſtrikes at the Root of Chriſtian Faith, the only Foundation of true Religion.

6. Secondly, The Doctrine of *praying* to Saints, and *worſhipping* of Images. To the Virgin *Mary* they pray in theſe Words: "O Mother of GOD, O Queen of Hea-" ven, command thy Son to have Mercy upon us." And " The right Uſe of Images (ſays the Council of *Trent*) " is to honour them, by *bowing down* before them." *Seſſ.* 25. *Par.* 2.

This Doctrine ſtrikes at the Root of that great Commandment, (which the Papiſts call Part of the Firſt) *Thou ſhalt not bow down to them, nor worſhip them*, i. e. not any Image whatſoever. It is groſs, open, palpable *Idolatry*, ſuch as can neither be denied, nor excuſed; and tends directly to deſtroy the Love of GOD, which is indeed the Firſt and and Great Commandment.

7. Thirdly, The Doctrine of *Perſecution*. This has been for many Ages a favourite Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*. And the Papiſts in general ſtill maintain, That " all Hereticks (that is, all who differ from them) ought " to be *compelled* to receive what they call the *true Faith*; " to be *forced* into the Church, or out of the World."

Now this ſtrikes at the Root of, and utterly tears up, the Second Great Commandment. It directly tends to bring in blind, bitter Zeal, Anger, Hatred, Malice, Variance; every Temper, Word and Work that is juſt contrary to the loving our Neighbour as ourſelves.

So

So plain it is, that these grand *Popish* Doctrines of *Merit*, *Idolatry* and *Persecution*, by destroying both Faith and the Love of GOD and of our Neighbour, tend to banish true Christianity out of the World.

8. Well might our Forefathers *protest* against these: And hence it was that they were called *Protestants:* Even because they publickly *protested*, as against all the Errors of the *Papists*, so against these three in particular: The making void Christian Faith, by holding that Man may *merit* Heaven by his own Works; the overthrowing the Love of GOD by *Idolatry*, and the Love of our Neighbour by *Persecution*.

Are you then a Protestant, truly so called? Do you *protest*, as against all the rest, so in particular, against these three grand, fundamental Errors of Popery? Do you publickly *protest* against all *Merit* in Man? All *Salvation* by our own *Works?* Against all *Idolatry* of every Sort? And against every Kind and Degree of *Persecution?*

I question not but you do. You *publickly protest* against all these horrible Errors of Popery. But does your Heart agree with your Lips? Do you not *inwardly* cherish what you *outwardly* renounce? 'Tis well, if *you*, who cry out so much against *Papists*, are not one *yourself*. 'Tis well, if you are not *yourself* (as little as you may think it) a rank *Papist* at the Heart.

9. For, first, How do you hope to be saved? "By "doing thus and thus? By doing no Harm, and paying "every Man his own, and saying your Prayers, and go-"ing to Church and Sacrament?" Alas! alas! Now you have thrown off the Mask. This is *Popery* bare-faced. You may as well speak plain, and say, "I trust to be "saved by the *Merit* of my own Works." But where is CHRIST all this Time? Why, He is not to come in, 'till you get to the End of your Prayer. And then you will say, for JESUS CHRIST'S Sake—because so it stands in your Book. O my Friend, your very Foundation is popish. *You* seek Salvation by your own *Works*. You trample upon the *Blood of the Covenant*. And what can a poor Papist do more?

10. But let us go on. Are you clear of Idolatry any more than the Papists are? It may be indeed, yours is

in a different Way. But how little does that ſignify? They ſet up their Idols in their *Churches:* You ſet up yours in your *Heart.* Their Idols are only covered with *Gold* or *Silver:* But yours is *ſolid Gold.* They worſhip the Picture of the Queen of *Heaven:* You, the Picture of the Queen or King of *England.* In another Way, they idolize a dead Man or Woman; whereas your Idol is yet alive. O how little is the Difference before GOD? How ſmall Pre-eminence has the Money-worſhipper at *London,* over the Image-worſhipper at *Rome?* Or the Idolizer of a living Sinner, over him that prays to a dead Saint?

11. Take one Step further. Does the *Papiſt* abroad *perſecute?* Does he *force* another Man's Conſcience? So does the *Papiſt* at Home, as far as He can; for all he calls himſelf a *Proteſtant.* Will the Man in *Italy tolerate* no Opinion but his own? No more, if he could help it, would the Man in *England.* Would *you?* Don't you think the Government much overſeen, in *bearing* any but thoſe of the *Church?* Don't you wiſh they would *put down* ſuch and ſuch People? You know what *you* would do, if you was in their Place.—And by the very ſame Spirit you would continue the Iniquiſition at *Rome,* and rekindle the Fires in *Smithfield.*

12. It is becauſe our Nation is over-run with *ſuch Proteſtants,* who are full of their own *Good-deſervings,* as well as of abominable *Idolatry,* and of blind, fiery Zeal, of the whole Spirit of Perſecution; that the Sword of GOD, the Great, the Juſt, the Jealous GOD, is even now drawn in our Land; that the Armies of the Aliens are hovering over it, as a Vulture over his Prey; and that the *open* Papiſts are on the very Point of ſwallowing up the *pretended* Proteſtants.

13. Do you deſire to eſcape the Scourge of GOD? Then I intreat you, firſt, Be a *real* Proteſtant. By the Spirit of GOD aſſiſting (for without Him you know you can do Nothing) caſt away all that *Truſt* in your own Righteouſneſs, all Hope of being ſaved by your own Works. Own, your *Merit* is everlaſting Damnation; that you *deſerve* the Damnation of Hell. Humble yourſelf under the mighty Hand of GOD. Lie in the Duſt. Let your Mouth be ſtopt. And let all your Confidence be

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in the *Blood of Sprinkling*; all your Hope in JESUS CHRIST *the Righteous*; all your Faith in *Him that juſtifieth the Ungodly, through the Redemption that is in* JESUS.

O put away your *Idols* out of your Heart. *Love not the World, neither the Things of the World.* Having Food to eat, and Raiment to put on, be content: Deſire Nothing more but GOD. To-day, hear his Voice, who continually cries, *My Son, give Me thy Heart.* Give yourſelf to Him, who gave Himſelf for you. May you love GOD, as He has loved us! Let Him be your Deſire, your Delight, your Joy, your Portion, in Time and in Eternity.

And if you love GOD, you *will* love your Brother alſo: You will be ready to lay down your Life for his Sake: So far from any Deſire to take away his Life, or to hurt a Hair of his Head. You will then leave his *Conſcience* uncontrolled; you will no more think of *forcing* him into your own Opinions, as neither can he force *you* to judge by *his* Conſcience. But each ſhall *give an Account of himſelf to* GOD.

14. It is true, if his Conſcience be miſinformed, you ſhould endeavour to inform him better. But whatever you do, let it be done in Charity, in Love, and Meekneſs of Wiſdom. Be zealous for GOD: But remember, that *the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteouſneſs of* GOD: That angry Zeal, tho' oppoſing Sin, is the Servant of Sin; that true Zeal is only the Flame of Love. Let this be your truly Proteſtant Zeal: While you abhor every Kind and Degree of Perſecution, let your Heart burn with Love to all Mankind, to Friends and Enemies, Neighbours and Strangers; to Chriſtians, Heathens, Jews, Turks, Papiſts, Hereticks; to every Soul which GOD hath made. *Let* this *your Light ſhine before Men, that they may glorify your Father which is in Heaven.*

An HYMN.

1 WHERE have I been ſo long
Faſt bound in Sin and Night,
Mix'd with the blind ſelf-righteous Throng,
Who hate the Sons of Light.

2 O how ſhall I preſume,
JESUS, to call on Thee,
Sunk in the loweſt Dregs of *Rome*,
The worſt Idolatry!

3 A Stranger to thy Grace,
Long have I labour'd, LORD,
To 'ſtabliſh my own Righteouſneſs,
And been what I abhor'd.

4 Foe to the *Popiſh* Boaſt,
No Merit was in me.
Yet in my Works I put my Truſt,
And not *alone* in Thee.

5 For Works that I had wrought
I look'd to be forgiven,
And by my virtuous Tempers thought
At laſt to *purchaſe* Heaven.

6 But O my dying GOD,
By Thee convinc'd at laſt,
My Soul on that atoning Blood,
On that *alone* I caſt.

7 My Works of Righteouſneſs
I caſt them all away;
Me, LORD, Thou frankly muſt releaſe,
For I have Nought to pay.

8 My Faith is all in Thee,
My only Hope Thou art,
The Pardon Thou haſt bought for me,
Engrave it on my Heart.

9 The Blood by Faith applied,
O let it now take Place!
And ſpeak me freely juſtified,
And fully ſav'd by Grace.

F I N I S.